

# *Plan Kruzan*

## *A Vision For Bloomington's Economy*

*This document is an outline of economic growth and community development initiatives for the City of Bloomington to pursue aggressively in the next four years and into the future.*

### *Vision*

A good place to begin a campaign and an economic development plan is to ask, “What do we want Bloomington to look like in the next 20 years?”

I have a vision for Bloomington that is one of balance. A community in which we protect our natural beauty and responsibly manage growth. A place where people prosper economically but don't forget the needs of others. A city that's growing but retains the character of a town.

I wrote the text of this blueprint for Bloomington — but you generated the end product. I've spoken with hundreds of community residents and have learned a tremendous amount about your concerns and priorities. I've distilled from those conversations ideas that I've included here. Together, they shape the foundation of my campaign for Mayor and my vision of Bloomington in the next decade and beyond.

### *DISCLAIMER*

The issues discussed within this plan are not intended to be all-inclusive. A politician's worst nightmare is starting a list of people to introduce or proposals to make and realizing, too late, that it will be impossible to include everything. When you find something that's missing in this plan, please feel free to share your ideas by contacting me at [mark@kruzan.us](mailto:mark@kruzan.us) or 355.MARK(6275).

The plan is also not intended to be absolute. Leading consists of constant learning. I'm interested to hear your perspectives about what's right and wrong about these proposals.

## *The Plan*

My effort here is to present to you something more than a disposable campaign piece. It's intended to be a map of attainable goals with measurable results.

The role of local government in economic development is as facilitator for creating the right quality of life amenities and healthy business climate environment.

My vision is simple: create the best environment in the U.S. among Bloomington's peer cities for economic growth by improving the city's quality of life and business climate.

Bloomington can then create and retain high technology, good-paying jobs, improve quality of life, increase the tax base and raise the standard of living for all of its residents.

To achieve these goals we must concentrate on improving the four keys to entrepreneurialism: talent, technology, capital, and culture.

### *"Bloomington is a Community of Commerce & Character"*

The challenge is to create an improved climate for economic growth and better lives for all of our residents. My goal is to empower the people and businesses of Bloomington to achieve all that they can to strengthen our community.

In the grand scheme of things, there is a natural tension in the relationship between government, residents, and businesses in Bloomington. And there is always room to improve it. The best way for the city to strengthen this relationship is for the mayor to reach out to all of these groups to solicit their input regarding the issues confronting our community's economic growth. The city will then be much better positioned to turn challenges into opportunities so that we can grow our regional economy.

My economic growth & community development plan, **Plan Kruzan**, is outlined below. We can build a better Bloomington. Here's how:



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IVY TECH  
CRANE  
MONROE COUNTY AIRPORT  
COMMERCIALIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY  
CITY-COUNTY RELATIONS  
CITIZEN SURVEY & COMMUNITY BENCHMARKING REPORT

## BUSINESS OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICE

Originally, what you're about to read was at the very end of my proposal. But the text belongs at the beginning — because customer service is where I intend to have city government start.

A city official will be designated to serve as a business ombudsman. This person would serve as a spokesperson within city government on small business and industry issues. She or he would be active in outreach, visiting businesses regularly to learn their concerns.

A key responsibility would be the preparation of a Business Impact Report that would analyze how every new city initiative, including things like the sign ordinance and street projects would affect small businesses. The post's role would be to help existing businesses and pave the way for new ones to get started via a vis permits, zoning information, and other city issues.

### *Customer service is an issue.*

There are two primary reasons to have a business ombudsman. First is to ensure responsiveness. You shouldn't have to weed through countless departments or phone transfers to get an answer to your question. The adage "time is money" is an accurate one.

The other reason for an ombudsman devoted to business is that the business environment is dictated by our community's reputation. Perception is everything. We have to create the mindset that Bloomington is where you want to be if you want to run a productive and profitable venture.

Part of that perception is to be found in how well permitting is handled. A healthy exercise would be for city government, working with the Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations, to conduct a thorough regulatory review.

I am committed to rules and regulations that protect the well-being of the community. At the same time, I want to ensure those rules and regulations are reasonable and equitably enforced.

All of this should be done in a very visible manner. The word should go out to existing and prospective businesspeople that we, quite literally, mean business.

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Bloomington business is comprised of 98 percent small businesses. Most job creation in Bloomington will come from small businesses. We can help small businesses by ensuring city government does not make it difficult for them to succeed.

The city should work closely with business groups to serve as a clearinghouse of information regarding economic development programs, government contracting opportunities, and access to capital.

In order to enhance the environment in our community for small businesses to grow, we need to understand their needs and the current challenges that they face in order for local government to be responsive.

*Small business development is the lifeblood of the economy.*

We should complete a comprehensive survey of small businesses in Bloomington to determine what issues impact them the most. The opinions of our local small business owners are critical to a dialogue of where we are and could be as a city.

In addition, the city of Bloomington will encourage small businesses to work with local government and BEDC to determine whether they would be eligible for local and/or state economic development incentives.

I am very cognizant of hurdles facing small businesses. Global challenges include transitioning world, U.S., and state economies; Indiana's brain drain; a lack of venture capital in the state; and negative perceptions regarding Indiana and its ability to succeed in a technology-based economy.

Locally, there must be stability from city government. Constant change and uncertainty in government processes complicate the ability to succeed in business.

## BUSINESS ATTRACTION

There are numerous entities working on economic development, but initiatives can be better coordinated. I'd like to spearhead the coordination of our many, varied, and valuable efforts already underway.



I will work closely with the business community to help drive targeted economic development. A mayor's responsibility is to serve as the community's chief salesperson for economic development, and I would do so.

Indiana University develops a tremendous amount of research that can be commercialized so that private sector companies can develop new and/or modify existing products. The next mayor must ensure the city works closely with the business community and IU to determine the best ways to transfer technology out of the university and nurture new & existing businesses in Bloomington.

Crane, along with its many vendors, is also a vital economic engine for southwest Indiana. We must consider traditional and nontraditional ideas regarding the best ways to keep the highest level of employment possible at Crane and to encourage spinoff industry opportunities.

Finally, it's important for the city of Bloomington to market the region's amenities and quality of life to attract new businesses to the area. We need to showcase our neighborhoods, schools, cultural assets, and the influence of IU as well as local industrial and business sites. A high quality of life attracts high paying jobs.

### BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESSFUL ECONOMIC GROWTH & BUSINESS ATTRACTION

The next mayor must lead the effort to benchmark Bloomington against peer competitors and seek input from the community regarding the types of businesses that we should attract to the city.

We must understand how we compete in terms of human capital, physical infrastructure, tax structure, real estate costs, quality of life, creativity & entrepreneurialism, and government services.

The amount of new capital investment in the community is another important benchmark. New capital investment in Bloomington validates our community as a place for businesses to grow and prosper.

In addition, we need to track the number of new business starts in Bloomington. This factor demonstrates the entrepreneurial spirit in the city.

Finally, we need to benchmark the amount of technology developed at IU and commercialized in Bloomington. IU is a premiere research institution and the more technology and brainpower we can harness in our community, the better off we will be.

## RETAINING & EXPANDING EXISTING BUSINESSES

I want to work with existing Bloomington businesses to help them increase productivity, grow, expand their employment base, facilitate problem resolution, and simply have their questions and calls promptly responded to with common courtesy.

The heart of any community's economic development strategy must be the retention and expansion of existing businesses. More than 75% of new job creation in a community comes from existing businesses. It is important for the city of Bloomington to reach out to its existing businesses to determine the best ways to help support growth of existing companies.

In order to foster growth of existing businesses, we will launch, in partnership with The Chamber and BEDC, an aggressive existing business visitation and customer satisfaction survey program, Building Bloomington Businesses. Volunteers comprised of people in the business community will visit businesses on a regular basis to determine whether the company has plans to expand their operations. We must do everything that we can to ensure that we are nurturing and growing our existing businesses.

## TARGETED INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

It is crucial that the City of Bloomington identify and target the industry clusters that the community is well positioned for and desires to attract to the area. Often communities do not have a well-defined strategy or want to attract industry clusters that are unrealistic given the human and physical infrastructure environment in the area.

Bloomington is well positioned to leverage the research and human capital resources of Indiana University to attract and expand businesses already located here. The city will work with economic developers and other business experts to conduct a study to determine the types of industry clusters that should be

targeted by our community. In addition, Bloomington must act aggressively to respond to the challenges presented by the change from a manufacturing to a knowledge-based economy in order to ensure that our residents and students have unlimited employment opportunities.

## REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Bloomington needs to have a balanced regulatory environment in order to protect residents and businesses alike, and to preserve our outstanding quality of life. In order to achieve this result, the city will review regulations impacting economic development in the community to ensure that we create the proper balance between public safety/health/environment and encouraging businesses to grow to create jobs and wealth in the community.

For worthy economic development projects, we must make the permitting/regulatory process as streamlined as practical. In an era when a world is moving faster and faster, government must be responsive and responsible to residents and businesses.

## JOB CREATION

Every month, we hear the “good news” about Bloomington’s low unemployment figures. But all of us know the underlying truth — low unemployment statistics do not reflect the high rate of underemployment that plagues our community.

PhDs applying for office temp work is not at all uncommon. Many people are working two or more jobs to try to make ends meet.

And there are still people without work.

Our job creation initiatives should aim to provide diverse opportunities for diverse populations. Affording people opportunities for advancement and keeping the “job cycle” in motion will prevent a stagnant employment scene.

A real danger is a class of citizens with no chance to break the bonds of poverty. A loss of an entire group of people’s energies is a moral failure as well as a drain on limited resources and a waste of a much-needed skilled workforce.



All economic development efforts should focus on luring companies that pay high wages or helping existing medium-sized and small businesses grow.

The city should act as a catalyst for businesses to partner with Ivy Tech and Indiana University as well as MCCSC in developing a well-rounded workforce to serve as a talent pool for all type and size employers. By working with institutions of learning, city government can ensure Bloomington workers have the skills needed by local employers. In the past year, employers such as Baxter and PTS have been able to invest and grow in part due to state funding for training.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A highly educated workforce is the lifeblood of businesses we seek to grow, attract, and retain. It is also vital for Bloomington to foster an environment in which people already in the workforce have access to continuing education, through vocational and technical programs, in order to further develop their set of transferable skills.

Training programs are a win-win leading to better productivity for Bloomington businesses and better wages for our workers.

*Human development is key to economic growth.*

Education and job training enable our citizens to make a better living and provide for their families. The city should evaluate the use of tax increment financing to fund job training assistance for residents of the city. Not only will this benefit our citizens, but it will also provide an enhanced workforce for the regional business community. If we believe it makes sense to spend TIF dollars on physical infrastructure, we can certainly invest capital in our human infrastructure.

City government should also work collaboratively with the BEDC, Chamber, and Indiana University to create a database of all graduates from IU during the last ten years that have moved out of Indiana and provide companies in Bloomington with access to the information to bolster their employment recruitment. We all know people who would love to “come home” if only they had meaningful employment opportunities.

## INCOME GAP

A threat to the health of our economy is the community's growing income gap. Many people are doing well here, and they must continue to prosper. But other people are in economic distress.

More than 80 percent of the kids attending Fairview Elementary, for example, qualify for subsidized school lunches. That's the Bloomington too many of us do not know.

Children should be able to grow up healthy and strong, free from violence and abuse, and encouraged to make healthy choices through positive activities. Working parents need affordable, quality childcare. Those in crisis should have access to basic needs, and those in poverty must have the tools to lift themselves up. People with different abilities should be valued and engaged. And, if Bloomington is to remain a great place to retire, seniors must enjoy a full range of opportunities.

City budgets should be developed with an eye toward their impact on fixed income individuals. People have lived their entire lives saving for retirement and budgeting carefully. Government spending cannot outpace citizens' ability to pay.

Business, government, social service, and other community leaders have to start by sitting down to take stock of where we are and develop a long-term and comprehensive approach to poverty. Affordable health care, job training, education at all levels, literacy and language skills opportunities, youth development, and a myriad of other issues must be on the table.

A mayor should help lead that effort.

## NONPROFITS AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS

Social service providers and other nonprofit organizations help improve the economic condition of the entire community.

Social service funding consists of three aspects. It provides direct service, is the morally right thing to do, and makes sound economic sense.

Social service spending is unjustly stereotyped as being an economic drain. Instead, it is a tool that enables people to achieve self-sufficiency. A huge return is realized from that investment when all people are productive, taxpaying citizens.

Nonprofit agencies are economic developers in that they employ 10 percent of Bloomington's workforce and contribute to job creation with programs such as Middle Way's Food Works.

City government can help nonprofits by serving as a repository of information, providing grant assistance, and offering fundraising and board development training.

## EDUCATION

City government should not take an interventionist role in school matters. Instead, the attitude should be that advanced by the Franklin Initiative — partnering for better education.

The paradigm has shifted from K-12 education to Pre K-20 education. Since Bloomington is home to one of the nation's top research universities, there is no reason why we cannot be a leader in providing top quality education opportunities to all of our residents throughout the education life cycle.

The next mayor should work closely with parents, teachers, business leaders, and MCCSC to determine ways the city can help support the improvement of public education in Bloomington. The city can directly assist schools by building sidewalks, enhancing public safety, and improving parks near and around schools. Those steps help the schools as well as the surrounding neighborhoods.

In addition, we should “take it to another level” by incorporating adult continuing education/lifelong learning into the discussion. It is vitally important for our citizens in the workforce to continue to upgrade their skills in order to be better positioned to improve their standard of living. Pre K-20 education is probably the most important aspect of economic development during the next decade.

An exciting prospect is partnering with Ivy Tech. The explosive enrollment increases as well as the new leadership and campus site at the college have established Ivy Tech as a powerful force in shaping Bloomington, Monroe County, and the region.

Indiana University develops a tremendous amount of research that can be commercialized so that private sector companies can develop new and/or modify existing products. The next mayor must ensure the city works closely with the business community and IU to determine the best ways to transfer technology out of the university and nurture new and existing businesses in Bloomington.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Diversity is an important element in a community such as Bloomington. We must celebrate and foster development of a diverse community in order to achieve future economic success.

One critical component of creating a diverse economy is through the development of affordable housing. Bloomington must offer housing options throughout all price ranges in order to adequately meet the needs of businesses that need to hire a cross-section of employees in the community.

### *Affordable housing is a business issue.*

We should identify housing redevelopment opportunities in which the city can play a role in creating housing options throughout all pricing levels. In some cases, this will result in new construction while in others, we will see the redevelopment of existing properties.

In addition, residential developers, neighborhood leaders, university representatives, city personnel, and experts can help guide the city through the process. We will aggressively pursue neglected properties to reduce neighborhood blight, inferior living conditions, and crime.

## BUSINESS ECONOMY & THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Stewardship of our natural resources, including land, is absolutely critical to enhancing Bloomington's way of life.

A sound environment and community growth do not have to be mutually exclusive. But without adequate attention, they can be. "Growth" does not just mean "more." It also means "better."

There are a number of ways to ensure the preservation of a healthy environment and a growing economy. The most important place to start is in land use planning and zoning. The city must work with residents and businesses to identify the environmental and economic growth goals of the community in order to enhance Bloomington.

Bloomington's environment is an important aspect of our economic development efforts. Our beautiful forests, lakes, creeks and open lands draw people from all walks of life to our community.

Most families and employees of businesses seek to live and work in communities where these two components are priorities.

As mayor, I would actively work with our city planners to determine the best ways to strike the proper balance between the environment and growth. The input of both residents and business leaders will be of utmost importance to establish and meet beneficial community goals.



Plan  
"SMART GROWTH"

The city must embrace the concept of smart growth to retain the quality of life and environment that makes Bloomington the very special place that it is today. Smart growth does not mean no growth but rather well planned, balanced growth in a community.

Bloomington must more aggressively pursue urban redevelopment to place buildings and property "back in service" in order to benefit residents and businesses alike. In addition, it is critical for the community to examine the undeveloped property in the area to determine the highest and best use for property.

Physical growth and how we manage it are significant issues facing the city. Our uniqueness is our strength. Without a vision of where we are headed, there is a danger of losing that uniqueness.

Basic planning and zoning principles demand that as citizens of Bloomington, we plan carefully and with foresight. We are all architects of our community's future.



## GPP

A strong and steady hand will be needed to balance the competing interests of the community and assure a reasoned and rationale route is taken in the implementation of the Growth Policies Plan.

One person's property protection is another's property restriction. All perspectives must be heard and considered.

There has been much debate over the adoption of the new GPP as well there should be. But perhaps even more crucial is that we remain vigilant in monitoring how and how well its provisions are implemented in upcoming years.

The general public is hearing about design standards, downtown density, and sewer extension policies. The real meaning of those and other terms as well as how they will impact our lives needs to be carefully explained to taxpayers today and beyond.

More than anything, the GPP must ensure predictability to all stakeholders. People may not always agree with the results when it comes to planning and zoning, but at the very least, they should know where they stand from the outset.

In the final analysis, a focus on community development, in addition to economic development, is key.

## TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS

Somehow or another, the "third rail" of Bloomington politics has become I-69. The community is divided on the project, which invites divisiveness in "debate."

I've opposed the 3-C route. I sincerely believe taxpayers should be concerned that what was once billed as an \$800 million project now has a \$2 billion price tag before construction has even started. The loss of land owned by existing businesses or by families for generations is an even higher price to pay.

That having been said, community leaders have a responsibility to ensure that everyone's thoughts are heard.

I respect the opinions of people who believe the road will be an economic engine. I also acknowledge the emotion involved on the other side of the issue. I cannot respect extremes on either side of any issue if they are unwilling to listen to alternative views. I will stand up for anybody's right to be heard. And I will stand against incivility from any quarter.

Whether I-69 comes or not, the SR37 corridor and what might be the interstate's path should be considered. Discussion and planning needs to focus on frontage roads, overpasses, highway cuts, the impact on mobility of motorists traveling west-east, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, infrastructure improvements, and other issues.

In addition, the city will work with the State of Indiana to minimize the environmental impact and relocation of residences and businesses.

### PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The city must have a sound strategy in place to assess, plan, and construct physical infrastructure to support residents and businesses alike. If our physical infrastructure is inadequate, our quality of life and economic growth will be dramatically impacted.

To that end, we need an assessment of current infrastructure in Bloomington to determine and prioritize what infrastructure needs to be reconstructed in the short and long-term in order to adequately support the needs of the community.

### POLICE & FIRE PROTECTION

Often not thought of as an economic development issue, public safety important to reputation of community.

A good example of the importance to of public safety to the business community is the fact that fire ratings are important for insurance purposes.

City police and fire departments need to discuss business concerns and interests in the short and long-term. Examples are the importance of security in the downtown area and our parking garages as well as the importance of public confidence that all structures are in compliance with fire codes.

## STATE SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

I won't be shy in utilizing my 16 years working with Indiana's economic development programs to benefit the City of Bloomington.

Representing Bloomington in the legislature from 1986-2002 including six years as House Majority Leader, I developed a thorough knowledge of state economic development programs as well as working relationships with state administrators and legislators, both Republican and Democrat. Those contacts are key people in the state who need to be asked to invest in our city.

The recently created Energize Indiana plan is one way state programs can assist Bloomington. We need to aggressively pursue a number of that state plan's initiatives.

The Hoosier business investment tax credit is an especially attractive tool for small businesses and large corporations. Bloomington businesses can receive a 30% tax credit for capital investments whether for the purchase or modernization of equipment, new construction, or building renovation. City government can help market this feature to existing employers to encourage job expansion and increased productivity. And we should be using this tool to recruit employers.

### *"Leading Bloomington to economic prosperity"*

The venture capital tax credit can help us create a more dynamic Bloomington economy by investing in young companies engaged in research and development. These high tech businesses are vital to Bloomington's economic future. A 20% tax credit for making an investment is a significant incentive. We should explore opportunities for pooling funds and attracting dollars that strengthen young businesses.

A new state program that recently became available is the ability of Indiana's maritime ports to fund capital improvement projects. Even though Bloomington does not have access to a state port, we can access funding for capital improvements through the Indiana Ports Commission. That agency has the money and the authority to enter into lease-financing agreements with local companies to make capital improvements.

Part of helping Bloomington business is knowing where to look for assistance.

## CERTIFIED TECHNOLOGY PARK

A certified technology park would give Bloomington a place for new companies to locate and help us better serve those businesses already here.

Bloomington is eligible for state funding to establish a technology park, which could provide an incubator for life science companies and other high-tech firms. West Lafayette and Anderson have already got a head start. I do not want to see Bloomington left behind.

By working with Indiana University, we can provide a location and the supportive services that help new companies get started. Such investment could strengthen existing corporations such as Cook and Baxter but would also lead to spin off companies and the attraction of suppliers.

It is vital for the community to closely consider the location of the new certified technology park. We must carefully balance issues such as access to IU; proximity to existing areas of business concentration in the region; access to amenities which support technology businesses and their employees; proximity to infrastructure including roads, sewers, and fiber optics; and impact on the environment.

One very important aspect of the creation of a certified technology park in Bloomington is the creation of a new city park within the boundaries of the technology park. New urbanism leaders have indicated that the successful communities of the 21st Century will be the ones that cater to the “creative class” worker.

One of the key attributes of a community for that breed of worker is the presence of parks and green space. As a result, the location of a city park within a technology park not only helps attract these types of workers but also creates an additional amenity for the community.

Finally, it is essential that Indiana University be a full partner in the development of a certified technology park. Bloomington is quite blessed to have a leading U.S. research university in its community and for the technology park to reach its full potential, we need IU’s financial and human capital support.

## FIBER OPTICS

Bloomington must move quickly to take advantage of recently passed legislation providing dollars to Bloomington and other cities in Indiana to improve fiber optics infrastructure in their communities. High speed, reliable telecommunications infrastructure is vital to businesses and residents alike. Our city must do everything that it can to ensure topnotch connectivity to position Bloomington for success in the 21st Century.

In some cases, geographical location is still relevant to site selection decisions made by companies. However, in most cases, businesses can serve the clients from great distances. To compete for these types of opportunities Bloomington must have the fiber optics infrastructure in place to support these types of companies. Fiber optics infrastructure will also play a critical role in the development of the new certified technology park in the city.

## VENTURE CAPITAL

Venture capital is a key component required to nurture entrepreneurs and young companies. However, venture capital is not the “end all, be all” in terms of developing new technology companies in our community. If a community lacks a sufficient supply of talented people and good ideas, does not possess research and technology transfer capabilities, and does not provide an attractive business climate, all of the venture capital in the world will not create economic growth. For Bloomington to move forward, we must convince venture capitalists that Bloomington is a good place to invest capital.

The new venture capital tax credit is an important tool, but we must do more to educate venture capitalists in the Midwest and throughout the United States to look at Bloomington as they do Ann Arbor, Michigan, and other communities which host major research universities like Indiana University.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

The Bloomington Economic Development Corporation accounts for one-tenth of one percent of the city budget. Somehow, it's ended up involved in an exponentially greater amount of controversy.



It is important for the city of Bloomington to have the BEDC in place to help attract new industry to the community and support the retention & expansion of existing companies in the city.

Many companies choose to work with non-governmental agencies during the site selection and due diligence process in order to protect confidentiality.

A new way to publicly fund BEDC should be for the city to enter into a contract with the organization that would establish benchmarks and outcomes as a result of the investment. Things such as amount of capital investment secured, new jobs created, jobs retained, and average hourly wage levels of jobs associated with successful projects would be used as benchmarks for the contract. The city needs to actively support economic growth initiatives that benefit the public good as well as ensure a return for the investment of taxpayer dollars.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

City government should develop and implement an economic development incentive accountability program to ensure the interests of taxpayers are protected. Program elements will include wage thresholds, incentive claw back provisions, cost-benefit analysis, decision-making criteria, and annual compliance standards for all economic development projects receiving some form of financial assistance.

All companies receiving financial assistance from the city will be expected to sign project agreements to ensure that they meet their commitments to the community. Compliance will be monitored.

Bloomington must be a good steward of the taxpayers' money when investing in economic development projects.

These accountability provisions are not original thinking. They are precisely the procedures utilized by former Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith.

## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

A community's downtown is its signature.

For any city to be successful, it must have a healthy center core. While Bloomington has made a number of strides in this regard, much more needs to be done to ensure that Bloomington maintains a strong downtown. Downtown revitalization must focus on three primary areas: retail businesses, non-retail employment, and residential living. With the onset of what have become known as “big box” retailers, many of our homegrown, family owned retail businesses have had a difficult time staying competitive.

Downtown retailers are faced with higher costs than “big box” retailers who operate outside of the downtown area. With this in mind, the city of Bloomington must do everything within its power to encourage people to come downtown, improve the quality of services, and provide businesses and residents who operate and live downtown with more control of what takes place in the downtown area.

Issues such as beautification, parking, security, and amenities are critically important to developing a vital downtown. Many young professionals, empty nesters, and technology workers desire to live in an urban environment.

I would like to discuss the possibility of a Homeowners Association-style entity to represent downtown businesses and work with the Downtown Bloomington Commission. If successful, it could assist local businesspeople to pool their resources for things such as snow removal, trash pickup, and other necessities. It would be a group that would treat downtown business almost as if it was a mall without a roof.

### *Downtown is everyone's neighborhood*

A staggering 1,100 new residences in downtown that are just now coming online present significant challenges, but they certainly do not have to be insurmountable hurdles. These new “Downtowners” represent a market-in-waiting. The city must work with the business community as soon as possible to establish buying patterns early for these new residents. In so doing, local businesses can benefit economically, more downtown residents can find employment opportunities within walking distance, and traffic and parking problems can be abated.

I want to focus the energies of the city on best preparing our city center for the influx of new residential units and to create a 24-hour community in downtown.

We must stimulate the development and redevelopment of office buildings in downtown Bloomington. My goal is to expand the current downtown office sector so that there is a diversified group of businesses including professional services (such as financial, legal, accounting, and marketing communications) and other business types to allow for new capital investment and job creation.

A newly established Downtown Community Revitalization Enhancement District (CREED) will allow the city and the Bloomington Industrial Development Advisory Commission to capture increases in sales tax and state and local income tax revenues to invest in downtown improvements and redevelopment incentives. The district would also give businesses in the district an opportunity to apply for a 25% credit against their state tax liabilities for investments in new or rehabilitated buildings.

In the past, when people from surrounding communities spoke of “going into Bloomington,” they meant visiting downtown. Now, they more than likely mean shopping at a row of west side chain stores. I want to recapture the interest of those people by making downtown a regional magnet for visitors and local residents alike.

## PARKING

You can't talk about Downtown Bloomington without talking about parking.

An amazing 50% of the downtown surface is dedicated to parking, but it is still not enough. While I want to do all I can to encourage pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the area, the real world issue of automobile use has to be addressed.

We need to think more creatively about parking solutions. Every conceivable option has to be on the table. Not all the results will be popular, but we cannot stagnate in our approach to solutions or we'll never accomplish them.

Is there an appropriate place for another garage? Would increased shuttle use be practical? Would downsizing “those planters” that were installed in recent years create more spaces?

A missed opportunity was the failure of the city and county to achieve an agreement for county employee use of the Seventh Street & Walnut garage. I want to take another look at the issue of downtown employee, county and otherwise, parking patterns and options.

### *Parking — the perennial problem*

Parking garages can often be plagued by graffiti, broken glass, and unpleasant odors in the stairwells. Our garages have to be made more inviting to maximize utilization. Manners to do just that can include the use of stepped up security and police patrols, security cameras, and web postings of the photos of vandals with the offer of rewards for information leading to prosecution.

These suggestions may sound a bit like Rudy Giuliani cleaning up Times Square — but you know what? He cleaned up Times Square. Garages have to be made attractive to get people to use them. With the huge influx of downtown apartment units going in, parking is only going to get worse. We're paying for garages to go up — let's get our money's worth.

A bold approach should also be taken to traffic management. Improved East-West corridors have to be analyzed, and advancements should be made in public and alternative transportation.

The shifting economic emphasis from Downtown to East and now to the West has to be analyzed and addressed so that all segments prosper.

### *CONVENTION CENTER*

The new Gray Brothers Cafeteria actually has more square feet than our Downtown Convention Center. We need to make a more significant commitment to attracting larger groups of people and to declare we're in the convention business.

When the Chamber of Commerce held its annual luncheon this year, it actually had to turn people away because the Convention Center reached capacity. If we're telling local groups "there's no room at the inn," imagine the message we're sending to state and regional groups that want to bring their conference and convention business to Bloomington.

We need to bring more visitors into downtown to spend their money in our local shops and restaurants.

It's time to expand the Convention Center.

## TOURISM

Tourism should be considered an important part of Bloomington's economic growth.

Tourism is underestimated as an economic growth engine due to its 'feel good' nature. The Bloomington area takes in more than \$226 million revenue from tourism every year. That's 226 million reasons to take it very seriously as a real economic development force.

Tourism is big business. It's one of our largest industries, it's clean, and it's a very stable source of income.

The key to tourism is getting people to stay in town overnight rather than simply coming in for a day trip. Destinations that make people want to spend a couple of days in town are what bring in the real dollars. Once visitors start paying for dinners and hotels, the impact adds up.

Another important element to tourism is the boost for downtown merchants provided by tourists who shop. Tourists are as likely to buy from some of the specialty shops downtown as many of our residents.

There is no shortage of ideas of things we can be doing now to strengthen tourism efforts, including expanding the Convention Center, developing Bloomington into an arts destination, aggressively marketing the presence of 8 wineries, creating a Limestone Museum, and starting an industry tour program.

## MCDONALD SWITCHYARD & TRAIL CORRIDOR

It takes practically no imagination to stand on the CSX railroad tracks that are about to be abandoned and envision an incredible community asset that will become a regional attraction in upcoming years.



The city has to continue to carefully consider financing of the urban rail conversion project, but it should do so with an eye toward the tremendous benefits the investment will produce.

The trail has the potential to be a magnificent — and that's not a loosely used word — community amenity. The health and recreation aspect of the project are obvious, but the connectivity the trail will add to the community should not be underestimated.

And as a tourism magnet, the McDoel Trail could well become one of the state's premier destination attractions. With all the housing, shopping, and other aspects that will be drawn to the path of the trail, our community's downtown character will be transformed for the better.

The McDoel Switchyard & Trail Corridor project should serve as a catalyst to a reenergizing of our local economy.

## ARTS DISTRICT

Bloomington is a natural setting to promote the arts as economic development. One way in which to do that is through the creation of an Arts District.

The arts enrich our lives, but they also enrich our economy. The nonprofit arts scene annually generates more than \$44 million into the local economy.

Bloomington should continue to develop into an arts destination. An Arts District would be a place where artists' studios would be concentrated. A perfect location for the genesis of such a district would be somewhere along the McDoel Trail. The district would be a magnet for small businesses, restaurants, age-diverse residential units, markets, and recreation activities. Year-round residents and short-term visitors, alike, would reap the benefits of such a district.

An Arts District should also serve as an incubator assisting artisans who want to make a living with their craft. Shared facilities and business plan lessons would provide experience and work for both entrepreneurs and artists focused on their work.

A district would convey a strong message to prospective employers that while Bloomington is a small city, it has great opportunities. It's the same approach Herman Wells used to build Indiana University from a fledgling seminary into a great institution.

## EASTSIDE

It wasn't that long ago people were concerned about "gridlock" and too much business concentrating to the city's east.

Today, national chains locating to the west, Internet sales, and a weakened state and national economy challenge the Eastside.

A real concern is the sufficiency of telecommunications and fiber optics service to the area. We have to make the Eastside an attractive place to want to set up shop for prospective employers. Modernization of transportation and other infrastructure is another priority. When a business is deciding where to locate, it immediately looks to what kind and quality infrastructure is in place. We need to add value to the area for the Eastside to be an attractive place to do business.

### SIGN ORDINANCE

Revisions of the sign ordinance should be considered.

Decision-making processes that adopt such rules must do so with an eye to the fact that what may be viewed as a small issue to some can make the difference between profit and loss to others. If, for instance, a sole proprietor has to spend two hours at city hall to work out signage issues, that's two hours her or his business is closed.

The next city administration will be best positioned to address this issue as the comprehensive zoning ordinance is drafted and voted on next year.

Components of the ordinance that can be revisited include flexibility on the amount of time temporary signs can be used as well as the size and nature of such signage. Other elements that can be reconsidered are the size and setback of ground signs and geographic applicability of the regulations.

A look can also be taken at the matter of whether a logo, signage design, or name change for an existing business triggers new sign replacement regulations.

In the end, negotiations and tradeoffs are a part of the political and policy process and the goal should be to protect the aesthetic qualities of the community and the ability of businesses to thrive — and those are extremely compatible goals.

## INDIANA UNIVERSITY

One of the single most recent important statements made in this community was made in a speech made by new IU President Adam Herbert. Speaking to the Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting, President Herbert said, “Bloomington is home to Indiana University.” We should never take that fact for granted or assume it’s a view shared by everyone.

In recent years, there has been a discernable shift in emphasis at the university to the Indianapolis campus.

It is very significant that the IU Trustees voted to name Adam Herbert IU’s next president here in Bloomington and that President Herbert’s first public address was given in town.

It is important to keep lines of communication between the city and university open. When IU moves a football game to Indianapolis, for instance, the economic impact on local business is significant. We need to express that concern and others on a regular basis. And we need to remain open to helping IU thrive in Bloomington.

The city and business community should aggressively work with IU to build even stronger bonds with the university. “Town & Gown” is a remarkably important partnership.

*“Bloomington is the Home of Indiana University”*

An internal university task force is exploring ways that IU can more strategically contribute to economic development in Indiana and beyond. We should join forces with IU to initiate strategies that will strengthen the university’s role in fostering economic growth and development.

The city needs to include IU in local planning. IU needs to include the city in campus planning that impact the larger community.

We should consider public transportation looping through student housing to keep traffic down. The pressures are going to continue, and we can’t simply continue to funnel all students into downtown. Yet, we have to be cautious to preserve core neighborhoods.

The economic well-being of Monroe County and its surroundings undoubtedly receives a boost from Indiana University Bloomington's presence.

IU employs 6,900 area residents and is our largest employer. Visitors to IU contribute more than \$90 million to the local economy each year. IU annually purchases \$27.5 million in goods & services from local vendors.

Again, we can never take those impressive numbers for granted. We need to actively identify new ways to strengthen our city's relationship with IU and its surrounding community.

A new campus and new leadership at the helm of Ivy Tech make this an exciting time for the city to form a partnership with this important community institution.

Ivy Tech should not be an underestimated force. Ivy Tech-Bloomington is the fastest growing campus in the state. There has been more than a 200% enrollment growth in the last 15 years.

With Ivy Tech's presence, local residents will be given additional job training programs and career opportunities. Sixty percent of Ivy Tech-Bloomington's students are from Monroe County. Area businesses will benefit from a larger and better-trained work force.

And we should not forget to market Ivy Tech in economic development efforts. An increase in the educated work force means the county will be better able to promote itself to new industries.

An often-unknown statistic is that 99% of Ivy Tech students remain in Indiana producing increased income tax revenue, which benefits all taxpayers.

Twelve international companies have located in Columbus in recent years, all with Ivy Tech-Columbus involvement. I want to see Bloomington enjoy the same kind of success.

## CRANE

The city of Bloomington must aggressively leverage the presence of several technology-based contractors serving Crane to help grow our community's economy. In addition, the location of one of our state's two premier research institutions, Indiana University, provides us with the ability to assist Crane and its contractors with the commercialization of technology created in support of Crane's mission.

City government must join forces with state and federal allies to protect the Crane naval center from the upcoming Base Realignment And Closure process.

The loss of Crane would be a serious blow to our community. Crane employs nearly 4,000 people and more than 12,000 citizens depend directly on its payroll; it pumps more than \$320 million into the economy; it is the largest employer of scientists, engineers, and other technicians; it houses a bomb squad that assists local communities; and it promotes academic research of the environment.

Also, many vendors and suppliers to Crane are located in the Bloomington metropolitan area.

I hope to play a leading role in collaboratively working with elected officials, business leaders, and military officials to determine the best way to prepare for the 2005 BRAC process.

Crane falls equally within three congressional districts, so we must work with Congressmen Baron Hill, John Hostettler, and Steve Buyer. The economic importance of Crane transcends political parties. If the base closes, Democrats and Republican citizens, alike, will suffer job losses.

The city should also partner with the Southern Indiana Business Alliance that was created to spearhead the effort to save Crane from closure.

The focus should not be limited to letting the federal government know of Crane's importance to the area economy. We also have to demonstrate how much potential there is for Crane to drive future economic growth.

We should seize the opportunity Crane offers the area and showcase the potential the base offers the region economically.



Crane offers a broad range of skilled jobs and can assist in the attraction and retention of an educated workforce; invests almost \$5 million annually in workforce training, annually; partners with higher education institutions and can continue to do so to transfer technology from Crane and university research centers; and can play a role in developing a technology corridor between Bloomington and West Lafayette.

### MONROE COUNTY AIRPORT

Although owned by the county, the city has a stake in the success of the Monroe County Airport. It should be viewed as an important part of marketing the community to outside employers as well as a link for our local populace to various destinations. City government should commit to working with county colleagues in assisting on fund-seeking missions to state and federal governments.

### COMMERCIALIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Bloomington must do a better job of working with Indiana University, Cook, Crane, and other entities in the business and nonprofit worlds to ensure that technology developed in and around Bloomington is commercialized in the area.

Through commercialization of technology, new businesses are born and jobs are created. Often, new technology is birthed in the Bloomington area but ends up being commercialized in another location and our community misses out on the economic growth opportunities associated with the activity.

It pains me to say that West Lafayette and Purdue University have done a very good job of commercializing technology generated by the university to create new businesses, many of which have located in Purdue University's research park. Companies such as Bio-analytical Systems, SSCI, Endocyte, Cook Biotech, and Griffin Analytical were born as a result of a connection to Purdue University. We should catch up and surpass our friends to the north. This approach will take a change in emphasis on the part of IU so that Bloomington, and not just Indianapolis, can partake of technology commercialization.

In addition, Crane and its contractors offer a great deal of opportunity to launch new businesses as a result of technology developed in support of Crane's mission. Things such as electric batteries and fuel cells are being developed today at Crane and have tremendous commercial market applicability throughout the world.

## CITY-COUNTY RELATIONS

The city and county essentially share the same community, but you wouldn't always know that's the case. The problems are as much one of personality as politics.

City Hall should ask its Courthouse colleagues to discuss potential areas of collaboration between the city and county.

I support a collaborative planning approach involving the city and county. It is vitally important for both governmental units to coordinate land use planning and zoning efforts to guarantee the type of development occurring in the area is the most advantageous to the community as a whole.

We should explore economies of scale in planning and bidding out services/projects such as trash removal, road/sewer construction, and purchasing of goods and services. Together, the city and county can define mutually beneficial areas of collaboration and outline a plan to implement new initiatives.

Anything that we can do to lower the costs of government will benefit city and county residents, alike.

## CITIZEN SURVEY & COMMUNITY BENCHMARKING REPORT

For Bloomington to be successful, the community must understand how it compares with peer communities in North America. As our economy continues to evolve globally, we cannot consider similar sized cities in the Midwest as our only competition.

I plan to work with business advocates to conduct a Community Benchmarking process to evaluate our community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. We must understand how we compete in terms of human capital, physical infrastructure, tax structure, real estate costs, quality of life, creativity, entrepreneurialism, and government services.

In addition, we must fundamentally understand the types of industry clusters that the Bloomington area is best positioned to grow, attract, and retain. Just as when you build a house, you need a blueprint to finish the job, we have to have a blueprint for economic development to ensure the continued vitality of our city.

For Bloomington to continue to be a progressive and innovative city, we need to ensure that we are providing the types of services, at a high level, required by our citizens and businesses. The city will launch an annual Citizen Survey to determine how the city is doing in terms of providing services throughout the community. We will use the results of this survey to determine the priorities in terms of services for the residents and businesses of Bloomington.

The Citizen Survey and Community Benchmarking Report will be two of the most important customer service initiatives the city should do in upcoming years.

### *Final Thoughts*

This document is the backbone of my vision for the City of Bloomington. Much like the city itself, it is a work in progress. I'm in a constant state of learning. My favorite and the most rewarding part of serving in public office is the variety of issues I've been given the opportunity to address.

Few communities feature the beauty, diversity, character, spirit, and opportunity that paint the Bloomington picture. It's worth our time and effort to preserve and improve.

That's where you come in.

The next four years belong to us. We can use them to build a better Bloomington.

Let's get started.



NEW IDEAS ON RECYCLED PAPER



*Paid For By Mark Kruzan For Mayor*